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ABSTRACT

This booklet provides Alberta (Canada) grade 9 teachers, administrators, and students with samples of the full range of students' writing that exemplify the criteria used to score students' written responses on the June 1990 Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test. Commentary accompanying the students' writing samples in the booklet highlights selected features of the students' responses and shows how the scoring criteria relate to the students' work. The scoring guide for the written response part of the test is attached. (RS)

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this booklet is to provide Grade 9 teachers, administrators, and students with samples of students' writing that exemplify the criteria used to score students' written responses on the June 1990 Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test. Examples of the full range of students' writing are provided. The accompanying commentaries highlight selected features of the students' responses and show how the scoring criteria relate to the students' work.

Content

The Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test consisted of two parts: Part A: Written Response and Part B: Reading. This booklet describes the responses to Part A, which required students to complete a writing assignment based on the theme developed by a literature selection.

Each sample paper in this booklet has been reproduced as it appeared to the markers, that is, in the student's own handwriting. The planning and drafting sections, if used, are included. Accompanying each student's response is a discussion relating the characteristics of the response to the descriptors in the scoring guide. A copy of the scoring guide is included in the APPENDIX, pages 45 to 50.

As well, two of the outstanding papers that were written are described in the ADDITIONAL SAMPLES section, pages 33 to 40.

Selection of Papers

The papers selected for this booklet were used as samples for training markers during the July 1990 marking session. As such, these papers generally illustrate the quality of students' work at each of the five levels of accomplishment described in the scoring guide. The range of quality of students' writing is scored as follows: 5 EXCELLENT, 4 PROFICIENT, 3 SATISFACTORY, 2 LIMITED, and 1 POOR. Each paper was assessed on this five-point scale for specific qualities within each of the following reporting categories: CONTENT, ORGANIZATION, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, VOCABULARY, and CONVENTIONS.

Although the sample papers in this booklet were selected because each generally illustrates an overall score, variations from that overall score did exist within some reporting categories.

Confirming Standards

The initial work of confirming the standards that would govern the scoring of the June 1990 writing test was undertaken by a group of experienced Grade 9 English Language Arts teachers during the week of June 25. Their task was to read a large enough random sample of papers to determine the upper and lower ranges of the students' writing.

These teachers also suggested adjustments to the scoring guide where needed to facilitate the marking of the assignment. They selected papers that were representative of the range of written responses and illustrative of the various scoring descriptors. The second step in confirming standards was a day-long session held with those teachers who were specially selected to serve as leaders of small groups of markers. These teachers reviewed the representative papers selected during the process of confirming standards and endorsed them as appropriate examples of the various scores possible, thus setting standards for the marking.

Marking Process

Teachers were selected for marking on the recommendations of their superintendents. All the markers were teaching Grade 9 English Language Arts in the same school year that the test was administered and had done so for at least two years. The markers spent the first hours of the marking period in an intensive training session, which included a review of the scoring descriptors as they related to the representative papers previously selected by those teachers confirming standards and endorsed by the group leaders. These papers are discussed in the pages that follow.

Neither the name of the student nor the name of the school appeared on the test papers. Markers were advised not to mark a paper if they suspected that they recognized its source. They were instructed to disregard the quality of handwriting in evaluating the papers and to return a paper unmarked if they thought the handwriting could influence their judgment. Markers also referred to the planning and drafting pages to add to their understanding of the writer's intent. No marks were placed on the test booklets during the marking process. Scores were recorded on a separate score sheet. Papers were read by one marker, although a random sample of papers was read a second time to establish inter-marker reliability.

Cautions

The following cautions should be kept in mind when reading this booklet or when using the contents for instructional planning:

1. These sample papers reflect an interpretation of the standards that teachers established specifically for the July 1990 marking session. The interpretation of the standards and the judgments made by the markers at that time may vary with other writing assignments and with writing completed under different circumstances. Therefore, these samples should not be used as *models* of writing for instructional purposes. Rather, they are intended to indicate how teachers and students can determine strengths and weaknesses and use this information to improve students' writing.

2. Readers should consider each student's accomplishments in light of the constraints of test writing. Under test-writing conditions, students produce writing that must be considered as first-draft only. When students write under conditions that permit discussion, conferring, review, and reflection, they may produce work that differs substantially from what is illustrated here.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This booklet would not have been possible without the student writers who kindly granted us permission to publish their work and the valuable contributions of the following teachers and Student Evaluation staff:

Drafting of commentaries	Jo-Anne Hug -- County of Leduc #25 Suzanne Connell -- Test Development Specialist, English Language Arts
Confirming standards for the selection of sample papers	Sandy Cox -- Jasper School District #3063 Joe Foley -- County of Lacombe #14 Rick Gilson -- Grande Prairie School District #2357 Jo-Anne Hug -- County of Leduc #25 Joan McCulloch -- Regina Separate School System Maureen Swanson-Warren -- Lethbridge School District #9 Nola Aitken -- Test Development Specialist, Mathematics Suzanne Connell -- Test Development Specialist, English Language Arts Valerie Doenz -- Test Development Specialist, Social Studies Greg Hall -- Test Development Specialist, Science

GENERAL COMMENTARY

When the entire range of papers produced on the June 1990 Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test is viewed, several observations may be made about how Grade 9 students manage the assigned writing task. The papers are a source of information about approaches students take to planning and drafting their writing. Indications of how students develop as writers are also present. The following discussion is offered to teachers concerned with these issues and with their implications.

Those confirming standards and markers were pleased to note that the general quality of writing by Grade 9 students appears to be improving. They commented that most students were able to establish and sustain their responses to the writing assignment; there were very few unclear or poor responses. Students planned and organized their ideas coherently. In some cases, students needed to pay more attention to the development of purposeful, focused introductions and conclusions. Students' selection of vocabulary was satisfactory. Words and expressions were usually used accurately; however, in most responses, general rather than specific vocabulary was chosen to describe ideas. Control over conventions (mechanics and grammatical construction) was evident in most papers, although some basic errors were noted.

Teacher comments indicate that there is more writing going on in classrooms. When students write frequently to address their own purposes, they are usually better equipped to handle a test situation. Moreover, when students are given many opportunities to write in a wide variety of formats for diverse audiences, their comfort with their experiences as writers is demonstrated, as in tests such as this one. Teachers can help students with writing by setting up many and various encounters with literature in the classroom. They can also help students explore the techniques and strategies authors use in their writing. As well, teachers can help students to fulfil their intentions by providing instruction, adequate time, and occasion for writing in the classroom and can also assist students in learning how to address specific features of writing.

In testing situations, such as this one, students must draw on their knowledge and experience in order to respond to the assigned task. The range and extent of students' experiences are evident in their imaginative responses to the writing assignment. Students created contexts that reflect personal life experiences as well as encounters with text and with the media. In the classroom, teachers can help students by confirming that their own experiences, interests, and observations are valuable and are the best foundations on which to build their writing. Teachers can also help students by building background for writing about less familiar topics and by assisting students in focusing their writing.

GRADE 9 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACHIEVEMENT TEST

PART A: WRITTEN RESPONSE

JUNE 1990

GRADE 9 ACHIEVEMENT TEST
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Part A: Written Response

TO THE TEACHER

- Please read the instructions on this page to the students.

DESCRIPTION

- In this test, you are asked to read a poem that may provide ideas to help you complete the WRITING ASSIGNMENT on page 3.
- Time: You have two hours to complete the assignment.

INSTRUCTIONS

- You may use a nonelectronic ENGLISH LANGUAGE DICTIONARY and a THESAURUS.
- Write your ideas on the pages labelled PLANNING AND DRAFTING.
- Write your revised work in BLUE or BLACK INK on the pages labelled REVISED WORK.
- Remember that you may make changes and corrections on your revised work.

EVALUATION

- Your composition will be evaluated on WHAT you say and HOW WELL you say it (on CONTENT, ORGANIZATION, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, VOCABULARY, and CONVENTIONS).

JUNE 1990

WRITTEN RESPONSE TO LITERATURE

Read the poem "If —" and complete the writing assignment that follows.

If —

If you can keep your head when all about you
    Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
    But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
    Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
    And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream — and not make dreams your master;
    If you can think — and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
    And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
    Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
    And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
    And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
    And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
    To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
    Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
    Or walk with Kings — nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
    If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
    With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
    And — which is more — you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

The parent in Rudyard Kipling's poem "If —" gives the son advice about how best to face the challenges of life.

What advice might a parent give a daughter or a son as she or he begins high school?

In your writing be sure to

- CONSIDER your audience
- FOCUS on the purpose of your writing
- PRESENT your ideas in prose
- SUPPORT your ideas with specific examples from your own experience, from the experience of someone you know, or from your reading or movie viewing
- ORGANIZE your writing appropriately
- BUDGET your time
- PROOFREAD and correct your revised work.

Please turn the page and begin your writing.

SAMPLES

OF

STUDENTS' WRITING

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Student Sample A

General Comments

In this letter, the writer presents clear and coherent advice from father to son in a way that demonstrates a strong sense of voice. Although the writing is straightforward, it does contain some imagery. The fact that the writing is relatively error free demonstrates the writer's facility with language. It is representative of a 5 EXCELLENT in most reporting categories.

4 pages (1)

REVISED WORK

My Dearest Gage,

Congratulations son! Can you believe you've finally finished grade nine? All these years of hard work have paid off. As a reward you get at least three more years of schooling. That doesn't sound rewarding does it? My job as a parent is to help you see that this is an exceedingly important time of your life. You will cherish this time only after it is over. You will appreciate your teachers and friends only after they are gone. In preparation for this new step in your life you must realize and expect that I am going to babble and lecture, even if it is in the form of a letter. You can't tell me to "shut up" or "get a life." I have the advantage here.

First of all, you are going to miss your friends mortally, most of you are separating and going to attend different high schools. You will miss the security of belonging to a group. Let me assure you that even though you are leaving cherished friendships you will find new

Content

The advice that is given by the writer is appropriate for the purpose of the assignment. This purpose is clearly sustained throughout the piece. The audience has been effectively considered; one can imagine a thoughtful parent sitting down to pen a letter, such as this, to a child about to begin high school.

Because the ideas are carefully chosen and perceptive -- "You will miss the security of belonging to a group," "Next year your best friend should be yourself," "Both you and I know what these pressures are" -- the writing is lively and imaginative.

The writer effectively exhibits a parental tone: "I have the advantage here," "I have sounded like a vice-principal." A nervous humor, which makes the parent seem more human, has been successfully interjected into the piece: "As a reward you get at least three more years of schooling," "You can't tell me to 'shut up' or 'get a life.' I have the advantage here." The writer suggests that the relationship between parent and child may not be as close as the father would like: "I think

(2)

REVISED WORK

ones. Friends are essential to your happiness and trust me when I say that you won't be without them.

Your new high school is a very large place and at first you will be overwhelmed. After a few months your initial awe will pass and you will feel at home. Your Mother and I chose to send you to a private junior high away from home to help cushion these blows. I hope that being on your own has taught you self-reliance and dependance.

Next year your best friend should be yourself. I say this most of all because I am worried about the social pressures that you will be facing. Both you and I know what these pressures are. The only advice I can give is to trust your own judgement and know who your friends are. I trust you and I know you that you are aware of what is right and wrong.

I hope you have noticed that so far I have not tried in any way

this is a new begining for you and I want to be a part of it. I don't want to stand in the shadows like I have done in the past."

Organization

The letter format is chosen by the writer for the dispensing of parental advice. This medium serves to illustrate the distance between parent and child.

A purposeful and interesting introduction clearly establishes an appropriate focus. The parent congratulates the child on his successful completion of Grade 9 but reminds him of the importance of the three years of high school still ahead. The remainder of the letter provides the parent's advice, thus maintaining cohesion. The details are arranged in a purposeful and appropriate order. Transitions such as "First of all," "After a few months," "Next year," and "One change" effectively connect events and/or details. The letter's conclusion ties in well with the introduction. The parent says that he is "anxiously awaiting" the son's response. The final statements "The first words of your letter to me will probably be 'get a life'" and "I guess I deserve that" continue the easy, conversational tone and they effectively and creatively end the letter. The closing "Yours truly, Father" sustains the suggestion of distance between parent and child.

(2)

REVISED WORK

to compare you to myself when I was your age. I realize that things were very different then and my experiences probably would not affect you.

One change that you will encounter next year that I have neglected to mention is the academic challenge. You will have more freedom in your courses and you will be able to explore your interests. Hopefully you can handle the load and will do well. I am trying to encourage you to keep your goals in perspective. If you balance social life and work habits equally and properly you will have the time of your life. All I expect of you is for you to try your hardest.

I have sounded like a vice-principal lecturing on the rewards of high school, but I feel that this is all true. In the past three years I haven't seen much of you. I never really have gotten to know you as a person. I think this is a new beginning for you and I want to be a part of it. I don't want to stand in the shadows

Sentence Structure

The writer's sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. Type and length of sentences are varied. Short simple sentences such as "Congratulations son!" and "I have the advantage here" are skilfully employed. The writer has made excellent use of questions; for example, "Can you believe you've finally finished grade nine?" and "That doesn't sound rewarding does it?" Some sentences begin with phrases; for example, "As a reward" and "In preparation for this new step in your life." Parallelism is evident: "You will cherish this time only after it is over. You will appreciate your teachers and friends only after they are gone."

Vocabulary

Specific words such as "exceedingly," "initial awe," "self-reliance," and "perspective" have been carefully selected by the writer for effect. The use of strong verbs -- "cherish," "encounter," "encourage," and "am ... awaiting" -- add precision to the writing. Interesting metaphors such as "cushion these blows" and "stand in the shadows" show a mature command of language and are appropriate to the parental tone.

The writer misuses two words -- "mortally" and "dependance" -- but these errors do not in any way impede meaning.

(4)

REVISED WORK

like I have done in the past. I am anxiously awaiting your response. The first words of your letter to me will probably be "get a life". I guess I deserve that.

Yours truly,
Father.

PLANNING AND DRAFTING

Role - I (Parent in Story)
Audience - Teachers
Format - Letter
Topic - advice on entering High School
Purpose - To put myself in the place of a parent.

Planning - advice, reasons, expectations, thoughts, fears, worries } all of these expressed by the Parent in a letter.

Will be writing to a Son, who doesn't live at home.
~ Private School
~ Father is writing
~ consider child (personality).
~ Show that there isn't a closeness between Father and Son.

Rough Draft ~ ~~Dear~~ Grace, My Dearest Graf. Congratulations son! Can you believe it? You've finally finished grade nine, all these years of hard work have paid off. As a reward you get at least three more years of ~~schooling~~ (sounding) doesn't sound so good does it? ~~Base~~ My job as a parent is to help you see that this is a very important time of your life. You will cherish this time only after it is over. You will ~~always~~ appreciate ~~and miss~~ your teachers and friends, only after ~~they are gone~~. In preparation for this step in your life you must realize and expect that I am going to babble and lecture you, even if it is in the form of a letter. You can't tell me to "shut up" or "get a life". I have the advantage here. First of all you are going to miss your friends ~~a lot~~ (more than most) you are separating and going to attend different high schools. You will miss the security of belonging to a group. ~~Your school class is a very close group.~~ Let me assure you that even though you are leaving cherished friendships you will find new ones. Friends are essential to your happiness and trust me when I say that you won't be without

Conventions

This writer exhibits good control of the conventions of language, particularly given a test situation with time constraints. Spelling errors are rare. The preposition "like" is used instead of the conjunction "as": "I don't want to stand in the shadows like I have done in the past." This error is not uncommon in draft work by even experienced writers.

Planning and Drafting Comments

The writer has used the planning and drafting pages to good advantage. The RAFT model (RAFT: Role, Audience, Format, Topic) is used in the planning. This model works effectively for the writer; the ideas and details on the planning and drafting and on the revised work pages flow smoothly from the few additional planning notes. The many careful and thoughtful changes made to the first draft demonstrate the writer's revising and editing capabilities.

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new paragraph

them. Your new high school is a very large place and at first ~~I'm sure~~ you will be overwhelmed. after a few months, your initial ~~awe~~ will pass and you will feel at home. Your Mother and I chose to send you to a private Junior high school away from home to help cushion these blows. I hope that being on your own has taught you self-reliance and ~~dependance~~

new paragraph

Next year your best friend should ~~first of all~~ be yourself. I say this most of all because I am worried about ~~quite a few~~ the social pressures that you will be facing. Both you and I know what these pressures are. the only advice I can give ~~so that you will not give in~~ is to trust your own judgement and know who your friends are. I trust you and I know that you ~~know~~ are aware of what is ~~the difference between~~ right and wrong. I hope you have noticed that so far I have not tried in anyway to compare you to myself when I was your age. I realize that things were very different then and my experiences probably would not affect you in any way One change that you will encounter next year that I have neglected to mention

is the academic challenge. You will have more freedom in your courses and you will be able to explore your interests. ~~Hopefully~~ you can handle the load and will do well. I am trying to encourage you to keep your goals in perspective. If you balance social life and work habits equally and properly, You will have the time of your life.

All I expect of you is for you to try your hardest. ~~Anyway, I guess~~ I have sounded like a ~~nice~~-principal lecturing ~~you about~~ on the rewards of high school, ~~that~~ but I feel this ~~is~~ is all true. ~~In the~~ In the past three years I haven't ~~known~~ seen much of you. ~~I guess~~ I never really have gotten to know you as a person. I think this is a new beginning for you and I want to be a part of it. I don't want to stand in the shadows like I have done in the past. I am anxiously awaiting your response. the first words of your letter will probably be "Get a life". ~~Well~~, I'm finally finished ~~preaching.~~ I guess I deserve that.

~~Father~~ (Yours truly).

Student Sample B

General Comments

This selection illustrates a competent use of the journal format to respond to the writing assignment. Three entries logically sequence advice sought, advice given, and advice taken. This paper is representative of a 4 PROFICIENT in most reporting categories.

Final Draft

REVISED WORK

The Advice That Helped

July 2/90 - I just finished the torture test; well grade nine wasn't that bad. It's summer time now and there's nothing to do, excluding all the worrying about Highschool sneaking up. It's like looking down a dark narrow tunnel with this little bright light down at the end, which gets bigger and brighter as I get closer to highschool. I've talked to friends about next year, but there's no help or advice comming from them. Who can I talk to? Maybe I should try my parents.)

July 5/90 - I've just finished talking to my parents. I did not expect that.... but I got it. They really did help! I thought their first response would be 'Well, when I was a kid....' but I didn't hear that. They were so understanding. You could tell that my parents really did want to help. Anyways, they sat me down and started to give me advice on what I should expect in highschool and how I should act on that. The first point was to just be yourself. Don't act any different, just be yourself. The second point was to get right in there and get to the people; go around and make friend

Know

Content

In this paper, situation rather than advice is developed. The writer, in three journal entries, takes us from the "torture test" of Grade 9 through the long summer leading into that first year in high school. The actual advice, given by the parents, appears in the second entry. This advice is appropriate but commonplace.

Some of the writer's ideas are thoughtful; for example, "I did not expect that .... but I got it. They really did help!" The image of the "dark narrow tunnel with this little bright light down at the end, which gets bigger and brighter as I get closer to highschool" effectively illustrates the apprehension felt by the writer.

Organization

This paper is a series of three journal entries. Events and details are arranged in dated, chronological order throughout, which helps maintain coherence. The first entry serves as the introduction. It is purposeful and establishes an appropriate focus; the

REVISED WORK

The last thing they said was to do what you feel is best, work well in school, do what you've always done. I have no choice but to try this, so I will.

Sept. 14/90 - I'm one week into highschool and I love it. I have been following the advice that my parents gave me and it's working. The advice they gave me about getting to know more people has really worked out well. I have more friends now than I have ever had. This is great! Next time when I need help or advice, I'm going to my parents.

writer describes anxieties about entering high school. The parental advice sought in the first entry is given in the second entry. Closure is achieved in the third and final entry; the advice has been tested and found to be very useful.

Sentence Structure

Sentence structure is controlled. Sentences are varied in length and type; however, the pronoun "I" as subject is overused. Short sentences are frequently used for effect; for example, "Who can I talk to?", "They were so understanding." and "This is great!"

Vocabulary

Specific words and expressions show some evidence of careful selection and some awareness of connotative effect: "torture test," "excluding," and "Highschool sneaking up." Words are used accurately throughout, although the vocabulary tends to be rather unremarkable considering the overall quality of the paper. The tone is appropriate for the journal format chosen by the writer.

Conventions

Consistent use of correct conventions enhances the quality of the piece. The writing has few errors in spelling, punctuation, or grammar. The occasional spelling errors that are present such as "comming,"

"Anyways," and "allways" are careless but do not reduce the clarity of the communication. Ellipses have been used appropriately: "I did not expect that ...." and "'Well, when I was a kid ....'"

Mention should be made that although this writing is technically correct, the writer has made no visible attempt to take risks.

Planning and Drafting Comments

This writer has made good use of the planning pages. A RAFT model is used as the basic plan. Further notes divide the piece into "Beginning," "Middle," and "End."

It is obvious that the writer spent considerable time making revisions to the rough copy and this resulted in a proficient final draft.

PLANNING AND DRAFTING

Raft

R- A new Highschool student
A- Myself
F. Journal
T. Getting advice from parent for highschool

What advice might a parent give a son as he begins highschool?

Beginning

1st entery - just finish grade 9
in summer
looking for away to highschool
~~2nd entery~~ - Talked to friends
- I got no advice
- I'll talk to parents

Middle

2nd entery - I went to parents
- didn't get what I was expecting
- They were understanding
3rd entery - They really want to help
- They give me advice on highschool
They said - be yourself
- get in there and get to know the people
- do what you feel best

End

4th entery - 1st week in highschool
- advice really helped
- get and know people helped
- My parents helped.

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First Draft

July 2/90 - I just finished the ~~Torture~~ EP Test; well ~~it~~ grade nine wasn't that bad. It's ~~the~~ summer time now and ~~There's~~ nothing to do, excluding all the worrying ~~except~~ ~~worry~~ about Highschool sneaking up ~~coming up~~. It's like looking down a ~~dark~~ narrow dark tunnel ~~a dark tunnel~~ with this little bright light down at the end which ~~this light~~ gets bigger as I get closer to highschool. I've talked to friends about ~~next year highschool~~, but theres ~~I find~~ not help coming from ~~getting any~~ or advice ~~advice from anyone really~~. Who can I talk to? Maybe I should try my parents.

July 5/90 - ~~I just~~ just finished talking to my parents I did not expect that..... but I got it. They really did help! I ~~was surprised~~ though their first

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response ~~to~~ would be 'well, when I was a kid....' but
~~that wasn't what I heard~~. They weren't understanding
I didn't hear that.
You could tell that my parents really did want to help.

anyways, they sat me down and started to give
me ~~all the~~ advice on what I should expect in
highschool and how I should act on that. The first point was to just be yourself
Don't act any different, just be yourself. The
second point was to get right in there and get
to know the people; go around and make friends
The last thing they said was to do what you feel
is best, ~~keep your head~~ work well in school, do what you've always
done. I have no choice but to try this, so I will
Sept. 14/90 - I'm ~~about~~ one week into highschool

and I ~~am just~~ loving it. ~~It's all because~~

I have been
~~I am just~~ following the advice that my parents
and its working
gave me. The advice they ~~told~~ gave me about getting
more
to know ~~the~~ people has really worked out well.

I have more friends now than I have ever had.
This is great.
Next time when I need help or advice, I'm going
straight to my parents.

T.S.
- Grade nine is over, and I love it
- I'm looking forward to highschool but there is on problem.

C.S.
- I should have went to my parents in the first place.

Titles
- Journal
- Highschool
- Advice
- The great Advice I got
- The Advice That Helped

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Student Sample C

General Comments

This paper presents straightforward, sequenced advice from parent to child about entering high school. It is representative of a 3 SATISFACTORY in most reporting categories.

Final draft

REVISED WORK

As the high school years draw near, parents are faced with the difficult job of acknowledging their daughters or sons what they are heading into. What advise is to be given to the students? That is what this essay is all about. What parents need to advise their children on what to do.

First of all, tell your child that they need to know that High school is the most important step of their life. Tell them that high school is the beginning of a new life, choose classes according to your goal and follow your goals to a better life.

Then you must tell them that there are good times and there are bad times. Good times such as intermural sports and good grades on tests, boost the morals of your student. Bad times such as failing marks, and fellow students ridiculing your daughter or son, bring down the moral of your child. Let them know about the bad times and good times of high school.

Content

The writer's purpose is established in the first paragraph and is generally sustained throughout. The declaration "That is what this essay is all about" is characteristic of the setup used by many "satisfactory" students. Ideas are straightforward and relevant but conventional; for example, "studying provides good marks, and good marks mean a good high school year." The writing tends to be somewhat repetitive but does fulfil the basic requirements of the assignment in a matter-of-fact way.

Organization

The introduction is functional but mechanical: "What advise is to be given to the students? That is what this essay is all about." Events and details are arranged in a discernible order, and coherence is maintained by the use of commonplace transitions such as "First of all," "Then," and "Next." Closure is very mechanical, as it mainly sums up the ideas presented in each paragraph; however, it does relate to the introductory focus: "If you have followed this essay."

REVISED WORK

Next, let your child know that he/she needs the willpower to learn and learn well. If the will power is there, then the learning ability is there. A student needs the willpower to trust in him/herself that they do have the willpower to learn and grow with highschool.

Your child's study habits are important. Tell them that studying provides good marks, and good marks mean a good high school year and can get you where you want to go. Studying is the best way to acheive.

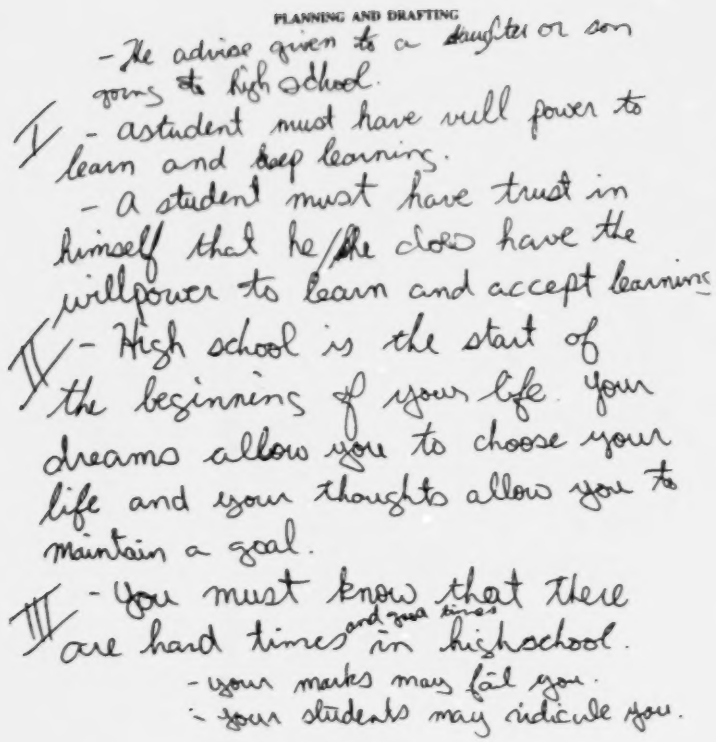
If you have followed this essay, and told your future scolar that high school is the most important step in their life, they should should now know that they must have willpower and good studying habits, ~~they should~~ To acheive very well on high school.

Sentence Structure

The writer seems to possess a basic sense of sentence structure, which is generally controlled although somewhat repetitive. Sentence type and length are sometimes varied. The response opens with an effective introductory clause: "As the high school years draw near." The question "What advise is to be given to the students?" establishes focus. The use of parallelism -- "Good times such as intermural sports and good grades on tests, boost the morals of your student. Bad times such as failing marks, and fellow students ridiculing your daughter or son, bring down the moral of your child" -- effectively juxtaposes 'good times' and 'bad times' in high school. Some constructions, such as the sentence fragment "What parents need to advise their children on what to do," are not effective.

Vocabulary

General words and expressions -- for example, "better life," "good times," "bad times," "good high school year" -- are often used where specific words would have been more effective. There is some inaccurate word usage. The use of "advise" for "advice" and "morals" for "morale" does not impede meaning; however, because of the misuse of the word "acknowledging," the first sentence must be re-read to understand the writer's intent. The characterization "future


PLANNING AND DRAFTING

- The advice given to a daughter or son going to high school.

I - a student must have will power to learn and keep learning.
- A student must have trust in himself that he/she does have the willpower to learn and accept learning.

II - High school is the start of the beginning of your life. your dreams allow you to choose your life and your thoughts allow you to maintain a goal.

III - You must know that there are hard times and good times in highschool.
- your marks may fail you.
- your students may ridicule you.

scolar" shows an attempt to take a risk; however, "scholar" is incorrectly spelled.

It is interesting to note that "ridiculing" is both used and spelled correctly.

Conventions

The writing has occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. "Achieve" is spelled correctly in one place and misspelled in another. Punctuation after introductory clauses, phrases, or words is used correctly. The correct pronoun reference in "A student needs the willpower to trust in him/herself" shows that the writer has some understanding of this concept; however, frequent errors in pronoun usage -- for example, "tell your child that they need to know that High school is the most important step of their life" -- indicate that more work is needed to master this abstract principle.

Planning and Drafting Comments

The writer of this paper has used the planning and drafting pages but not extensively. Three main areas are identified and numbered I, II, III. The first point notes that a student must have "will power" and "trust in himself." Point II suggests that "High school is the start of the beginning of your life." The third point discusses the "hard times and good times in high school." This paragraph

order is not followed in the revised work and a fourth section is added. Both an introduction and a conclusion are clearly evident in the revised work, whereas only a short introductory statement is included in the planning pages.

Student Sample D

General Comments

The writer tries to fulfil the assignment but falls short in the attempt. Because only one or two pieces of advice are ultimately given, the resulting paper is quite superficial. This writing is representative of a 2 LIMITED in most reporting categories.

REVISED WORK

When you go into high-school you should work at what you want. choose the coarses you want not what your friends want. If you can keep it working. then everyone is going crazy !

When you go into high-school you must think about your future. Think of what you want to do. consider all of your ~~opo~~ ~~opportuitell~~ ~~opportunities~~ options. consider what you want to do in the future.

When you are in high-school you call the shots. You pick and choose your coarses. You find new people to hang around with. If they skip you don't half to skip to for them to be your friends. always make the decision that suite you the best.

Content

The reader must infer that a parent is talking to a son or daughter about high school as the writer's purpose is only vaguely established: "When you go into high-school you should work at what you want. choose the coarses you want not what your friends want." The ideas used are superficial and repetitive, and they are unsupported: "you must think about your future. Think of what you want to do." Details are vague and scant; therefore, this writing does not completely fulfil the assignment.

Organization

The introduction and conclusion are evident but superficial: "When you go into high-school you should work at what you want"; "one of the greatest challenges is to be yourself. alway remember do what you want to do." There is no purposeful arrangement of details and coherence falters frequently. The idea of choosing and doing what you want is reiterated several times: "choose the coarses you want," "You pick and choose your coarses," "always make the decision that suits you the best,"

REVISED WORK

~~You must believe that you can do it and you will. You will feel better about yourself and you to~~

~~to how you enter~~ in high-school you will have many new challenges you will have more, harder tests you will try new things. You will have more friends. ~~There are so many challenges to defeat but if you work hard and keep at it you can and will enjoy high-school. always remember be yourself in high school~~

There are many challenges to defeat. if you ~~work~~ ~~frank~~ hard and keep at it you can and will enjoy high-school. one of the greatest challenges is to be yourself. alway remember do what you want to do.

and "alway remember do what you want to do." Transitions are rarely used. No clear focus is evident.

Sentence Structure

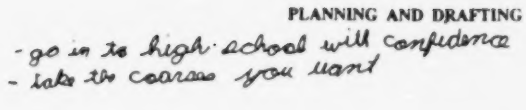
Control of sentence structure is sometimes lacking in this writing. There is little variation of type or length; most sentences used are simple, choppy, and not very effective: "you will try new things. You will have more friends." The writer does, however, use an introductory clause -- "When you go into high-school" -- and two introductory phrases -- "If they skip" and "in high-school." The imperative has been overused: "choose," "Think," "consider," and "make" are examples.

Vocabulary

Occasionally, the writer uses specific words or expressions such as "consider all of your options," "make the decision that suits you," and "many new challenges"; however, general words predominate in the piece. The tone is not consistently parental; for example, "You find new people to hang around with."

Conventions

There are frequent errors in proportion to the length and complexity of the paper; these errors tend to reduce the clarity of the communication. Capital letters are often omitted,



although periods are correctly used throughout. No punctuation is used after introductory clauses and phrases. The word "courses" is misspelled; "half" for "have" is jarring, and "alway" for "always" is a careless error. A great deal of revising and editing was done on the revised work pages, and this might account for some of the errors.

Planning and Drafting Comments

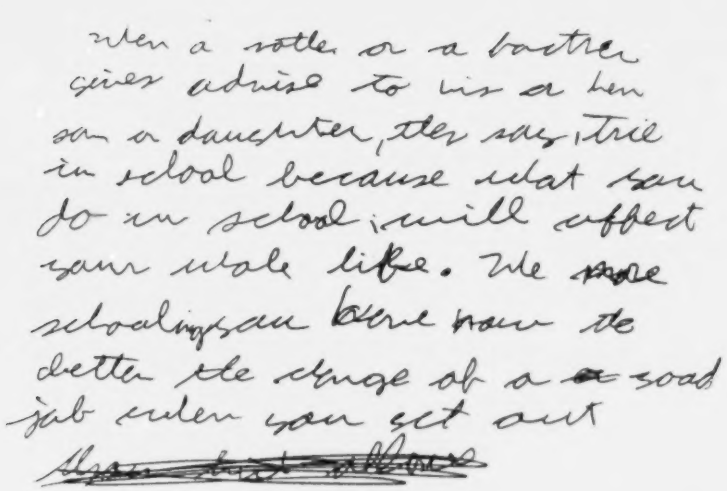
Only two points are made in the planning section. The first point -- "go in to high-school with confidence" -- is not directly used or expanded upon in the paper. The second point -- "take the coarses you want" -- is reiterated several times and seems to be the focus of the paper. The writer has revised and edited his/her work on the revised work pages rather than on the planning and drafting pages.

Student Sample E

General Comments

This paper is difficult to read and understand. It is representative of a 1 POOR in most reporting categories. The text seems to read as follows:

> When a mother or a father gives advise to his or her son or daughter, they say, trie in school because what you do in school, will affect your wole life. The more schooling you have now the better the change (chance) of a good job when you get out



Content

The writer's purpose is established and some attempt has been made to relate to the writing assignment. However, the purpose is not sustained because details are lacking. This writing is frustrating to read not only because of the poor handwriting and spelling, but also because of the lack of detail.

Organization

The introduction is not functional as no clear focus has been established. No attempt has been made at closure.

Sentence Structure

This writer appears to have some sense of sentence structure but does not punctuate correctly; punctuation is missing and/or is inappropriately used. This piece consists of only two sentences, the second of which is quite sophisticated and well balanced.

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Vocabulary

General words that convey only vague meanings are used. No tone has been established. The verb "advise" has been incorrectly used for the noun "advice"; however, the verb "affect" is used correctly.

Conventions

There are frequent errors in proportion to the length and complexity of this paper. The writer struggles with spelling: "trie" for "try," "wole" for "whole," and "change" for "chance."

There is some attempt at punctuation. A comma is correctly used after the introductory clause in the first sentence; however, commas are used incorrectly throughout the rest of this sentence. Although a period completes this first thought, punctuation is omitted after the second sentence. Because of the numerous errors in this piece, clarity is severely reduced.

ADDITIONAL SAMPLES

The papers in this document represent a small sample of the writing that was produced by Grade 9 students for the July 1990 marking session. Markers found that a number of students wrote extraordinarily creative responses to the writing assignment given the constraints of the testing situation. The two responses that follow are representative of these successful efforts to meet the 5 EXCELLENT scoring criteria.

These responses are lively, imaginative, and remarkably error-free. The writers establish and sustain focus in a coherent manner. They draw inspiration from their own experiences, those of others, and from the literature to which they have been exposed. Such writing should be applauded.

Paper A

New York State Penitentiary
111 Jail Road
New Hampshire
New York
T2H 1Z3

August 21 1990

REVISED WORK

My Son,

I write you this on your last day of childhood, hoping that you will listen to what I have to say, and not follow in my sordid footsteps. Please hear your old man out, and always remember the advice that follows.

When I was your age, I decided that school wasn't for me, that life didn't need to be complicated by some tedious education.

Oh yes, I went to school but I didn't learn anything. I spent my nights getting drunk and high, my days were spent recovering from those nights.

I did have some sense of decency, though. When I got your mother pregnant, I married her. My parents silently rejoiced because they thought, "maybe now he'll stop being such a wild cat and take on some responsibilities."

But I didn't. My nights were still spent partying and my days, still spent recovering.

I tried to find a job to support you and your mother, but who wants to hire a highschool dropout, with a prone to bad hangovers?

So I went back to partying, harder now. Soon I was addicted to every drug on this earth. And

we make it our business

Comments

This unique piece, written in letter format, is creatively set up as if it were written on prison stationery. The image of an incarcerated father who wishes a better life for his son is effectively depicted and sustained throughout. The letter has three components. The first outlines the father's past experiences, the second serves as a brief transition, and the third proffers the father's advice to his high-school-bound son.

One of the most outstanding features of this writing is its tone, which clearly shows the feelings of father for son. Even though there is a physical distance between parent and child, the writer establishes, in the opening paragraph, that the father cares for and is concerned for the child. In hoping that the son will listen to what he has to say and not follow in his "sordid footsteps," the father bares his soul and in the next few paragraphs chronicles his misspent youth. These experiences provide a strong case for

New York State Penitentiary
11 Jail Road
New Hampshire
New York
YBH 123

REVISED WORK

I learned fast enough that you need money to support one wife, one kid and one hell-of-an addiction.

I robbed and stole. Old ladies, little kids, couples who were just starting out in the world. I didn't care! I just wanted to get high and party some more.

I got caught. On your fourth birthday I got life in prison.

When the jury foreman stood up and said, "We find the defendant guilty, your Honor." My life flashed in front of me, and I saw the failure I had become. I swore right there, that your future wouldn't be like mine. So, my son, listen to me.

In the next three years, your accomplishments and failures, will determine ~~your future~~ the path of your existence. Do not do as I did, and throw your future away, chose a road that will lead to happiness and personal success.

Although this may sound silly, you must become an intellect, a "geek" you might say. Study hard, get good grades, become the head of your class. Do this so that you may become anything that you want to be in life. Don't waste

the counsel that he offers in the advice component of the letter.

In the transitional paragraph, the father realizes the error of his ways and swears that his son's future will be different.

What follows is typical advice interspersed with some admonitions, such as "never lose sight of your goals, for some ignorant reason," as well as a plea not to "turn out like me, a junkie with no education."

The writing falters briefly in the concluding paragraph. The tone is no longer personal. It is almost as though the father has slipped back into the reality of his prison existence. On the whole, though, the language employed is fluent, appropriate, and shows the writer's mature style and control of diction.

We make it our business to know

New York State Penitentiary
111 Jail Road
New Hampshire
New York
13H 1RJ

REVISED WORK

your time on wild partys, booze and drugs, keep your life in control, remembering all your expectations only exist in a hard working reality.

Go for the school activities, become a known face in the crowd of go-getters. Be an all round student.

You may surely have friends as many as you wish, just don't forget that friends care about your dreams, and those who don't just don't count.

You will probably fall head over heels in love, I just hope that it's with someone, who though may not share your visions, understands them. Always act responsibly with her, so you never lose sight of your goals, for some ignorant reason.

Through it all always remember your dreams, your aims, your ambitions, never let anything come in your way. For without the thought of reaching your goals, life will be meaningless, as it has been for me.

I love you too much to see you turn out like me, a junkie with no education, living behind the bars of reality...

So listen to your old man, son,
and go KICK SOME BUTT
at that high school of dreams and
realities.

Inmate #
1401

We make it our business to know

Paper B

"Be yourself"

REVISED WORK

"I thought you'd never get back."

"Oh Daddy, don't be silly. Look what Jeanie and I bought at the mall." She opened the long shopping bag and brought out mounds of clothes. "First, the tiger mini-skirt. Isn't it wild?" She flashed a short skirt with a loud orange and black print.

My eyes must have popped out of my head, because my daughter gave me the strangest look.

"What's wrong, daddy? Don't you like it?

"Like it? How much did it cost?" I asked, praying it was only about ten dollars.

"Eighty-nine dollars." she smiled. "I can't that great? It was on sale."

"Eighty-nine dollars?" I slowly repeated. "Eighty-nine dollars? Why on earth did you buy a skirt for that amount?"

"Daddy, if I don't look cool when I start high school, I'll have no friends. And the way I look at it, it's an investment." She smiled.

"But Ciera, you used to despise those kind of outfits. You said they were "tacky", and "ugly."

"I know," she frowned slightly. "but every-

Comments

This piece is a skilfully crafted conversation between a father and a daughter. The writer capably assumes both roles, smoothly changing voice with few lapses. The dialogue is strong, clearly written, and, most notably, authentic.

The introductory paragraphs serve to establish the carefree, easy relationship between father and daughter that is central to the communication. This particular conversation is prompted by the daughter's purchase of a "tacky," "tiger mini-skirt." The line "'And the way I look at it, it's an investment'" probably parrots what the father has said in the past and helps to define the relationship between father and daughter for the reader.

The subsequent exchange about the appropriateness of the skirt provides the stimulus for the fatherly advice on facing the challenges of high school. This advice is accented with references to his own high school experiences -- inspiration for which the writer may have drawn from the media.

Closure, which is achieved when the daughter "stuffed" the skirt back in the bag to return it to the store the next day, effectively resolves this complex, remarkably error-free dialogue.

body's wearing them."

"I'm not"

"You're not everybody." she laughed.

"I like the way I think I am" I told her.

"Daddy. I don't want to be left out. I want to fit in. If you don't dress like they do, you're a nobody." her eyes pleaded with me.

"Who told you that?" I questioned.

"Jeenie."

"Ciera, come here and sit down" I said in a gentle tone. She came and sat beside me on the sofa.

"Listen. In high school, everything changes. You're no longer at the top. You have to start at the bottom all over again. You're going to meet new people, some you like, and some you don't like. It's only natural to want to please them, to make a good impression, but you have to draw the line somewhere."

"What do you mean?" she asked softly.

"Well, I mean this." I picked up the tight mini-skirt. "This isn't you. It's - well, cheap. And you are not cheap. It sounds to me like you are trying to be someone you're not, using that skirt. What's going to happen when you stop wearing that skirt, and you go back to wearing your same old clothes? It's just like a performance. Say you were a clown. You got all dressed up in big baggy pants, colored hair, and your face smeared with a mask of make-up. Is that you?"

"I guess not." she said uncertainly, "but I don't get it."

"You will" I told her kindly. "You're right, it isn't you. But when you take off the mask and the colored hair and baggy pants,-"

"It's me" she giggled.

"Right, it's you without any pretense or disguise. You can never be something you are not. Oh sure, you can try. You can go to school and put on a false pretense to gain

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the friendships of others, but when you're tired of that disguise - and you will get tired of it - you'll take it off and throw it away. Then you'll just be left with you're normal self. But by that time, people are going to look sideways at you and wonder why you're not the same person that they met when you started high school. They're going to wonder why you changed, and they're going to want the same Ciera - the one they've come to know - the false one. But when you can't offer them back to them, they're not going to want to be your friends anymore. So you can go through life pretending to be someone you're not, or you can start being yourself right now." I smiled down to her.

She looked up, puzzled. "I'm all this you are saying the cover of the skirt?"

"No. Well, partly. It's a great deal more to it than the fact that you bought a tacky skirt that you didn't like." I got a smile out of her from that one. "It's got to do with ideals and values. There, I'll let you in on a secret. When I was in high school, I was a nerd." Another smile. "I used to slick my hair down, and always have a cowlick sticking up. I had braces that I'd wear everyday, and the only thing I was interested in was Einstein's Theory of Relativity."

"But come senior year, I wanted to be popular. I wanted to be one of those football players that got all of the attention, especially from the cheerleaders. I had a tremendous

crush on a beautiful blonde cheerleader. But she never noticed me.

"One day we were assigned to work together as lab partners in science. She never did anything, so I told her I'd do it all. She smiled and gave me a big hug. But there was a catch. She had to make me popular. She changed my style of clothing and soon the friends began to get taken with me. I went from "geek to chic." But I let it get out of hand. I let my popularity get the better of me, because that was my false pretense. That wasn't really me. Her friends found out that I had been bribing her by doing all of her homework, and they despised me. I'd never felt so horrible in my life. I tried to apologize and everything. After that, I began to be myself. Pure. Had to accept me as I was, or not at all. You see, you have to believe in yourself. I don't. Even if people do look at you sideways, you have to be your own individual. In high school there's more leeway - there's more freedom to be yourself. But there's also more pressure on you."

"But... finish the story."

I smiled. "Okay. About two months later, they forgave me, and everybody excepted me as myself. I wasn't a nerd anymore, but I wasn't super popular. I was just myself and I was content. But I learned the hard way."

"Daddy," she said suddenly.

"What?" I asked.

"Thanks. I'm going to return the shirt tomorrow and get something I really like." she said as she picked it up and stuffed it back in the bag.

"Oh, what ever happened between you and the blond cheerleader?" she inquired.

My dad grinned broadly. "I married her."

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DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES

When students are learning to write, they gradually develop confidence and competence in their abilities to cope with very complex tasks. Each student's developmental pattern is unique, yet certain commonalities may be observed as students attempt to gain control over various elements of composition. In the Grade 9 papers, students took risks with their writing and experimented with a variety of writing techniques. Their efforts were not all entirely successful but must be viewed as an indication of their awareness of the range of possibilities open to them as writers. Teachers can help students by becoming aware of their fledgling attempts to incorporate new features into their writing. These attempts need to be supported and encouraged, but they can also be seen as opportunities for teachers to instruct students within a meaningful context.

Students strive to use sophisticated words and phrases in their writing with varying degrees of success. They try to manipulate language to achieve ambitious goals. In the following example, the writer develops a situation that serves as a metaphorical statement about parental expectations for children.

a flower.

As soon as possible, I rushed to Golden Acres Garden Center, searching for the perfect piece of organic sculpture to grace my humble abode. I decided, after hour upon hour of careful search and deliberation, upon the hibiscus: a wonderfully beautiful plant (or so the salesman assured me) which needed a minimum of care. It was, I thought by way of self-congratulations, absolutely perfect for my needs. Now granted, in the store it looked a trifle thatched and unruly, but I was certain that with a little work and my natural touch for gardening it would blossom into the promised ethereal beauty.

In this passage, the writer describes the search for the perfect adornment for an "extremely drab" bedroom. Specific words and expressions -- "perfect piece of organic sculpture," "thatched and unruly," and "ethereal beauty" -- have been carefully chosen to describe the greenery being sought "to grace" the writer's "humble abode." Even the ultimate choice of plant -- the hibiscus -- is exotic. The writer attempts to vary sentence type and length to intensify the image of the "search." The rest of the composition develops the idea that, like the writer's expectations of the flower, parents' expectations of their children can be unrealistic.

Most students at this level struggle with the abstract concept of pronominal usage.

Intro.: When a boy or girl is going into high school, their parents may give them many pieces of advice. Both the parents and their children know that they are on their way to the "real world." Their performance in high school will have a large effect on their life as an adult. By giving advice to their children parents are trying to prepare them for life after high school.

Para. #1: T.S: When a parent says, "work your hardest at everything you do", he or she wants their child to realize working hard in high school will prepare he or she for the future.

This example typifies the problems that students have in making pronouns agree with their antecedents and in using proper pronominal case.

Perhaps the greatest improvement noted by the markers is in the area of organization. Because there is more opportunity for writing in classrooms, students are becoming more aware that there is a process to follow when writing. Most students understand that good writing has a functional introduction that establishes a focus. They are able to order events and details in a logical way.

Especially noteworthy is that most students exhibit an ability to effect closure that is related to the focus of the piece.

Parents love to give advice. It makes them feel needed and gives them a chance to share with us all of those little anecdotes about their high school careers that we had previously ignored. Parents don't want their children to make the same mistakes that they did as kids. My advice to them is this: Don't worry. We'll make our own.

In this example, the writer draws closure by giving justification to the parental advice given previously. The final sentences -- "Parents don't want their children to make the same mistakes that they did as kids. My advice to them is this: Don't worry. We'll make our own" -- effectively concludes this work.

APPENDIX

Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test

Part A: Written Response

Scoring Guide, June 1990

REPORTING CATEGORY: CONTENT*

When marking CONTENT, the marker should consider how effectively the writer

- establishes a purpose and considers the audience
- fulfils the assignment
- supports the response

5	EXCELLENT:	The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is clearly established and sustained. The ideas used by the writer to fulfil the assignment are carefully chosen and perceptive. Supporting details are precise and often creative. Such writing may be lively and/or imaginative.
4	PROFICIENT:	The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is clearly established and generally sustained. The ideas used by the writer to fulfil the assignment are thoughtful. Supporting details are relevant and well-defined. Such writing may demonstrate an attempt to go beyond the basic requirements of the assignment.
3	SATISFACTORY:	The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is established but may not be sustained. The ideas chosen by the writer to fulfil the assignment are appropriate but conventional. Supporting details are relevant but general. Such writing fulfils the basic requirements of the assignment but does so matter-of-factly.
2	LIMITED:	The writer's purpose, whether stated or implied, is vaguely established and may not be sustained. The ideas chosen by the writer to fulfil the assignment are inappropriate and/or superficial. Supporting details are scant and/or vague, and/or irrelevant. Such writing does not fulfil the assignment completely.
1	POOR:	The writer's purpose may be unclear; if a purpose is stated or implied, it is not sustained. Such writing shows a confused notion of what is required of the assignment. Details are inappropriate or lacking. Such writing may be frustrating for the reader.
INS	INSUFFICIENT:	The student has written so little that it is not possible to assess the content OR the marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to fulfil the assignment.

* as is appropriate at the Grade 9 level

REPORTING CATEGORY: ORGANIZATION*

When marking ORGANIZATION, the marker should consider how effectively the writing demonstrates

- focus
- coherent order
- connections between events and/or details
- closure

5	EXCELLENT:	The introduction is purposeful and interesting, and it clearly establishes an appropriate focus that is sustained throughout. Events and/or details are arranged in a purposeful and effective order, and coherence is maintained. Transitions, either explicit or implicit, effectively connect events and/or details. Closure is evident and purposeful.
4	PROFICIENT:	The introduction is purposeful and clearly establishes an appropriate focus that is generally maintained throughout. Events and/or details are arranged in a purposeful order, and coherence is generally maintained. Transitions, either explicit or implicit, appropriately connect events and/or details. Closure is related to the focus.
3	SATISFACTORY:	The introduction is functional and establishes a focus that may be inconsistently maintained. Events and/or details are arranged in a discernible order, although coherence may falter from time to time. Transitions may be missing in places or may not be appropriate. Closure is mechanical or artificial.
2	LIMITED:	The introduction may lack purpose and/or may not be functional; any focus established by the writer may not be maintained. Purposeful arrangement of events and/or details is not clearly discernible, and coherence falters frequently. Transitions are rarely used. Closure may be unrelated to the focus.
1	POOR:	The introduction, if present, is not functional or is inappropriate; no focus is established. The arrangement of events and/or details is haphazard and incoherent. Transitions are lacking or are used inappropriately. Closure is inappropriate, unconnected, or missing.
INS	INSUFFICIENT:	The writing has been awarded an INS for CONTENT.

* as is appropriate at the Grade 9 level

REPORTING CATEGORY: SENTENCE STRUCTURE*

When marking SENTENCE STRUCTURE, the marker should consider

- the degree to which the writer frames grammatically correct sentences
- the effectiveness and variety of sentence type and length

5	EXCELLENT:	Sentence structure is effectively and consistently controlled. Sentence type and length are effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, are used successfully for effect.
4	PROFICIENT:	Sentence structure is controlled. Sentence type and length are usually effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, may not be used successfully for effect but do not impede meaning.
3	SATISFACTORY:	Sentence structure is generally controlled. Sentence type and length are sometimes effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, occasionally impede meaning.
2	LIMITED:	Control of sentence structure is sometimes lacking. Sentence type and length are rarely effective and varied; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, often impede meaning.
1	POOR:	Control of sentence structure is generally lacking. There is no deliberate variation of sentence type or length; run-on sentences and/or sentence fragments, if used, severely impede meaning.
INS	INSUFFICIENT:	The writing has been awarded an INS for CONTENT.

* as is appropriate at the Grade 9 level

REPORTING CATEGORY: VOCABULARY*

When marking VOCABULARY, the marker should consider

- the effectiveness and accuracy of the words and expressions selected by the writer
- the appropriateness of the tone

5	EXCELLENT:	Specific words and expressions are carefully selected with an awareness of connotative effect. Words are used accurately and deliberately to fulfil the purpose. The tone is appropriate for the focus established by the writer and for the specified audience and is controlled throughout.
4	PROFICIENT:	Specific words and expressions show some evidence of careful selection and some awareness of connotative effect. Words are used accurately and often effectively. The tone is appropriate for the focus established by the writer and for the specified audience and is generally controlled.
3	SATISFACTORY:	General words and expressions are sometimes used where specific words would have been more effective. Words are generally used accurately. Attention to tone may be uneven.
2	LIMITED:	General, rather than specific, words predominate. Specific words, if present, are frequently misused. Tone is not clearly established or is inappropriate.
1	POOR:	General words that convey only vague meanings are used. No tone has been established.
INS	INSUFFICIENT:	The writing has been awarded an INS for CONTENT.

* as is appropriate at the Grade 9 level

REPORTING CATEGORY: CONVENTIONS*

When marking CONVENTIONS, the marker should consider the extent to which the writer has control of

- mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc.)
- grammar (agreement of subject-verb/pronoun-antecedent, pronoun reference, etc.)

PROPORTION OF ERROR TO LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY OF RESPONSE MUST BE CONSIDERED

5	EXCELLENT:	The writing is essentially free from errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Any errors that are present do not reduce the clarity of the communication.
4	PROFICIENT:	The writing has few errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Errors that are present seldom reduce the clarity of communication.
3	SATISFACTORY:	The writing has occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Some of these errors may reduce the clarity of communication.
2	LIMITED:	The writing has frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Some of these errors reduce the clarity of communication.
1	POOR:	The writing has numerous errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar that are both noticeable and jarring. Most of these errors severely reduce the clarity of communication.
INS	INSUFFICIENT:	The writing has been awarded an INS for CONTENT.

* as are appropriate at the Grade 9 level